



## ***AOT in Action***

### ***TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!***

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

#### **A Message from the Director:**

Good morning.

I'm pleased to announce that Kelly Paisley has accepted the position as deputy director at the Arizona Office of Tourism. Formerly the director of the Governor's Office of Efficiency Review and the director of community relations for Arizona's Department of Health Services, Kelly will now be a part of our outstanding team that is charged with expanding the volume of travel activity to the Grand Canyon State.

Kelly has extensive experience in community relations and communications, working for top level elected officials for more than 15 years within the community relations or communications fields here in Arizona as well as in Washington D.C. Kelly will bring an incredibly diverse amount of experience to AOT and her background in project management and implementing large scale programs and events, both domestically and internationally will complement and enhance the work we do in this agency.

Kelly begins her duties today and I know she is eager to start working with the entire tourism industry throughout Arizona. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Kelly to AOT as we are very excited to have her join the team.

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann  
Director  
Arizona Office of Tourism

## **AOT News Flash**

### **Teamwork for Effective Arizona Marketing (TEAM) FY 2008 Certification Workshops – SAVE the DATE**

The Arizona Office of Tourism is pleased to present our FY 2008 Teamwork for Effective Arizona Marketing (TEAM) Certification workshops. TEAM workshops are designed to provide comprehensive information on AOT's matching grant program and the applications process. To further assist communities and organization with their tourism planning and development, this year's workshop will also include information on how to develop a marketing plan. AOT offers the opportunity to attend a workshop in one of five Arizona communities: Phoenix, Sierra Vista, Kingman, Flagstaff, and Show Low. Workshop attendance is mandatory for those organizations who wish to apply for matching grant funding for FY 2008. To RSVP for a workshop, please contact Sarah Martins at 602-364-3687 or via email at [smartins@azot.gov](mailto:smartins@azot.gov). Please see below dates and locations, more information to follow.

#### **February 27, 2007**

12 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Licano's

573 West Deuce of Clubs

Show Low, AZ

## **Trippin' with AOT**

### **Join AOT at the Annual Japanese Market Sales Mission in Las Vegas**

Each year, the Arizona Office of Tourism, along with Utah, New Mexico, Wyoming and South Dakota, conduct a regional destination development seminar and workshop for the Las Vegas-based Japanese tour companies. Since the tour companies in Japan work closely with their operators in the U.S., it is critical for us to educate both groups. This year's mission is scheduled for Saturday, April 14, 2007. For the first time this year, AOT will sponsor an exclusive "Arizona only" golf outing after the seminar/workshop. Key Japanese tour operators will be invited to the event providing you an additional opportunity to network. For more information please contact Keiko Takahashi at 801-266-6645 or via e-mail at [keikouswest@yahoo.com](mailto:keikouswest@yahoo.com).

### **Reach the Mexican Market at ARLAG**

Each year the Airline Representatives Association of Guadalajara (ARLAG) coordinates a trade show for Mexican travel agents and travel suppliers. This well organized event is interesting because it not only attracts travel agents from Guadalajara and neighboring cities, but also travel agents from throughout Mexico. ARLAG will be held May 18, 2007 and brochure distribution will be available through the Arizona Office of Tourism at a cost of \$200, plus shipping. Please contact Kristy Swanson for more information at 602-364-3696 or via e-mail at [kswanson@azot.gov](mailto:kswanson@azot.gov).

### **Vancouver Golf Show, Vancouver, BC**

AOT attended the Vancouver Golf Show held at BC Place February 17th and 18th. This annual golf marketplace provides consumers with the opportunity to test the latest golf equipment, obtain free instruction, research golf resort vacations, and purchase golf products at special show prices.

An estimated 120 exhibitors had the opportunity to showcase, demonstrate and sell directly to more than 20,000 golf enthusiasts who attended last weekend. AOT distributed Arizona visitor guides, golf guides and maps, as well as brochures from Scottsdale and the Grand Canyon to hundreds of enthusiastic Arizona and warm-weather lovers throughout the Vancouver area. The Mesa CVB shared the AOT exhibit and distributed their golf brochure as well as Williams Gateway information. This is the second year AOT has exhibited at this show.

## Industry News

### Southwest Regional Culinary Tourism Symposium

Culinary tourism is the hottest niche in travel now. Attend the Southwest Regional Culinary Tourism Symposium on Monday, May 14, 2007, at the Arizona Biltmore Resort & Spa in Phoenix, Arizona and learn new ways to make your business more competitive and increase the appeal of the Southwest as a culinary destination. The event is co-hosted by the [International Culinary Tourism Association](#) and the [Greater Phoenix Convention & Visitors Bureau](#). The symposium sessions include: "Culinary Tourism: The Hidden Harvest"; "Creating Memories with Southwest Food & Wine"; "Perfect Partners - Lodging, Shopping & Cuisine: How the Partnership Works & Why"; "Who owns Southwest Cuisine: The Importance of Regional Food & Beverage Branding"; "Spa Cuisine: What's Hot and What's Not"; and "Educating the Visitor: Independent versus Chain Dining." For the complete agenda and to register please visit [www.culinarytourism.org/southwest](http://www.culinarytourism.org/southwest).

### Have Pooch, Will Travel

Once upon a time, traveling with a pet on business was unheard of. The pet-travel niche had been isolated to low-end motels catering to road-tripping families and luxury hotels bending the rules for fussy celebrities. The pet industry has since exploded to its current state, the second-fastest-growing sector for U.S. retailers. The travel industry has embraced this trend, and that has in part led to almost twice as many travelers with pets since 2003, according to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association. Derek Walsh, president of Bringyourpet.com, a Web site that lists pet-friendly lodging, says the number of hotels that take pets has increased substantially in the past few years. "For hotels to be more competitive, they've got to accept pets," he says. (*U.S. News & World Report.com*, 2/26)

### U.S. Plans to Ease Rule on Passports

The U.S. plans to ease passport requirements for teenagers and children crossing from Canada into the United States, in an attempt to defuse complaints that new security rules will throttle cross-border visitation. The Department of Homeland Security said Thursday it will propose allowing teenagers 18 and younger traveling with teams or organizations, and all children 15 and younger, to use a certified birth certificate to cross the border, instead of a passport. The change is an attempt to solve the "team bus" problem, in which critics said school trips and games between teams of neighboring towns would be canceled under the new U.S. rules requiring a passport to cross the border. The proposal will be subject to public comment as part of the rulemaking process of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative. (*Special to TA: AP; CNN.com; Pages A12, Washington Post; 3A, Miami Herald; Chicago Tribune.com*)

### TIA, YPB&R to Conduct Survey on Travel Trends

The Travel Industry Association and Yesawich, Pepperdine, Brown & Russell, the Orlando-based travel marketing research firm, will collaborate on the introduction of a new consumer survey designed to monitor the public's attitudes toward travel and measure the impact of current events on Americans' travel behavior and intentions. Known as "travelhorizons," the survey will look at

data on the prevailing lifestyles and social values of American adults. The results will be developed from a nationally-representative survey of 1,500 active U.S. travelers conducted every other month beginning this month. Survey topics will monitor the impact of the new U.S. passport requirements, fluctuations in the price of gasoline, significant weather events, world events and other developments likely to influence the travel habits or intentions of U.S. adults. The survey results will be made available on a subscription basis in April. For more details call 202-408-8422. *(Special to TA)*

### **FLA. Sales Tax Hike Could Hurt Tourism**

A proposed 2.5 percent hike in the state sales tax could harm South Florida's economy, by essentially creating a tax on tourism and big-ticket items and placing the area at a competitive disadvantage, some industry experts say. "A tax on the tourism industry would not be a good thing--not just for the airport but for Florida, period," said Miami-Dade Aviation Director Jose Abreu. "I really think if you want to come to Florida, 2.5 percent won't make a difference, you will still come to Florida," he said. "But the last thing you want to do on a national level is portray that Florida is expensive for taxes, and tourism is such a large industry." Latin American and Caribbean visitors, in particular, could head to Atlanta or Houston, rather than come to South Florida to shop. Under the proposal, Miami-Dade's sales tax rate would rise to 9.5 percent. Houston's sales tax rate is 8.25 percent; Atlanta's, 8 percent. Revenue from the sales tax hike would be used to offset soaring property tax rates for homeowners. *(Page 1C, Miami Herald)*